1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

district, fifteen miles to the north, far enough from the town, where the ugly galvanised iron sheds have not yet supplanted the old typical hut. We see, in the bush, on the slope of the sandy dune, a little forest of mimosa, *minkanye*, *mikawakwa* (Strychnos). In its midst nestles a village. Thongas like to build amongst trees, to protect themselves against the terrible south winds which frequently blow across the plain, and perhaps also to shield themselves from the inquisitive eyes of people passing along the road. The little community prefers to live by itself, as it is entirely self-sufficing. This small wood is also used for other purposes. Thongas have not yet learned to build the kind of outhouse which is described in English by two letters (W. C.), and they "go outside" (humela handle) into the little copse. The air is not very pure when we cross it, so we hasten to reach the village. The accompanying plan (p. 312) represents a combination of features observed in many Thonga kraals; it is rare to find a "muti" as complete as this.

We first note the external circular fence *(lihlampfu)*. It is made of branches, thorny or otherwise, one and a half to two feet high, more or less rotten. It is not built as a protection against enemies. In this tribe, villages are not fortified, and, in case of war, the only resource is flight. The fence protects against spiritual enemies, witches, as we shall see later on. The path leads us straight to the main entrance (16) the *mharana*, which is three or four feet wide. But the fence is open in some other places for narrower passages called *psiruba* (17), one for about every three huts; these smaller openings lead to the wood and are used only by the inhabitants to "humela handle." Passers by, as a rule, do not enter by such back gates. They are private. On either side of the large gate is often seen a growing tree and some poles, which clearly show the entrance. This is never closed during the day. On our right, a little court with some broken pots which denote a fire-place, is the *bandla* (21), the place where the men congregate. In front of us, at the other extremity of the circle, is the headman's hut (1) or rather the hut of his principal wife. On the way to it, we cross the *hubo* (22) the central square and pass round the *ranga*, (Ro.), *shibaya*

361 together with all the inhabitants of the kraal. The two huts near
313 the entrance are, on the left, the *lao*, where unmarried boys sleep
396 (14) and on the right (15) the *nhangu* where the girls live. Often
356 the nhangu is built behind the huts of the mothers, near the mhala ; in this way the girls are kept under more effective watch. The boys of the *lao* have to guard the door, which they close at night where it is the custom to do so. The *hubo* and the *bandla*, the squares, are generally kept quite clean.

361 In front of each hut is a *yard* (*ndangu* pl. *mindangu*, 23) which
372 is also generally well swept. In the centre of each of these are
417 some broken pots (mapseko), or pieces of hard clay taken from
351 ant-hills (psirubu) ; this is the *fireplace (shitiko)*, where the mistress of the hut cooks her food. The fence round the yard used, as a rule, to be made of poles or even trunks of trees planted near each other and forming a circular wall. Nowadays, especially amongst the Rongas, these yards are enclosed with reeds and may be built square, a single wall fencing off as many as three or four huts. The top of this wall is sometimes crenelated. I rather think this arrangement is modern ; the circular wall of the ndangu
585 is an old custom, as is proved by the following fact. On the day of
538 *hloma*, when the bride's-maids and female relatives bring the bride to her husband, they not only build up the woodpile (shigiyane, see page 112), but, in the northern clans, they must also erect a new ndangu which will be called *tsandana*, and so people will know that in the yard there is a *nhlomi*, a bride, working for her mother-in-law! The ndangu is the place where women tell folk-tales of the tribe to the children and to each other, whilst they attend to their cooking, or after the evening meal.

361 If cleanliness prevails on the square and in the yards, the
356 same cannot be said of the region between the huts and the
235 fence. This is called *mahosi* or *makotini*. It is the place where
351 old baskets and broken pots are kept. The chicken houses
343 (*shihahlu*, 27) are built there ; these are generally little huts, with reed walls, placed on a floor of palmtree boards, supported by four poles forked at their upper extremities. The *ash-heaps* are somewhat further on (24). They are called *tala*, and play a part in certain rites, representing, as it would seem, the place of desolation and of sorrow.

to be harvested. Poor cereals ! Many grains are wanting ! Those mischievous sparrows have taken more than a tithe ! In the marshy lands of Lebombo I noticed the people scaring the birds in a somewhat original manner. A cord was stretched right across the field, for a distance of at least thirty or forty yards, supported at intervals by poles, and on it were strung large snail shells (Achatina lamarkiana) as big as one's fist; when the watchers heard the sparrows chirping on the other side of the field, instead of getting up and running after them, yelling and shouting to scare them away, they merely pulled the cord, which made the shells jingle against one another, the movement and noise frightening the birds and sending them off to attack the crops of some less ingenious neighbour ! I have also seen scarecrows set up in some places, the ordinary stuffed figure. During these months of bird scaring it is impossible to get the caretakers to do anything but guard their plantations ! The little maidservants scamper away to join in the work and the Christian girls no longer come to school ! I can well imagine that the husbands often find empty larders at home !

The attraction of the plantation does not however hinder the labourers from doing full justice to the national beer, the bukanye, which is consumed from the middle of January to the end of February ! Besides, it is principally after the bukanye that it is necessary to protect the sorghum from the beaks of these winged destroyers.

The agricultural year ends with the *harvest*. Every one harvests his own fields and keeps, as far as possible, his product separate in his own store house. The ears of maize which have been left to dry on the stalks are broken off (tshobela) and are carefully piled in conical baskets in such a manner as to make them hold large quantities. The precious burden is at once deposited in the storehouse. After this the beans are picked (khaya) : these do not ripen much before May, after all the other produce, at a season which is called "the time of beans" (nkama wa timbawen). The ground-nuts are unearthed by pounding on the ground all round the stem, and pulling up the whole plant by the roots. It is curious to see the stalks coming